

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A rheology regulator, comprising a natural calcium carbonate, crushed to a high degree of fineness, with a specific surface area of around 14 to 30 m²/g measured according to the BET method to ISO 4652, wherein when 50-100% of a precipitated calcium carbonate present in a polyvinyl chloride-based plastisol is replaced with said rheology regulator, and said plastisol is subjected to a viscosity test according to DIN 125 at 20°C, the viscosity at 300 s⁻¹ is less than the viscosity obtained for the plastisol containing said precipitated calcium carbonate.

Claim 2 (Previously Presented): The rheology regulator according to Claim 1, wherein the natural calcium carbonate, crushed to a high degree of fineness, has a specific surface area of 14.4 m²/g, measured according to the BET method to ISO 4652.

Claim 3 (Previously Presented): The rheology regulator according to Claim 1, wherein the natural calcium carbonate, crushed to a high degree of fineness, has a specific surface area of 16 m²/g, measured according to the BET method to ISO 4652.

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): The rheology regulator according to Claim 1, wherein the natural calcium carbonate, crushed to a high degree of fineness, has a specific surface area of 16.5 m²/g, measured according to the BET method to ISO 4652.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The ~~rheology~~ rheology regulator according to Claim 1, wherein the natural calcium carbonate, crushed to a high degree of fineness, has a specific surface area of 22 m²/g, measured according to the BET method of ISO 4652.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): The ~~rheology~~ rheology regulator according to Claim 1 wherein the natural calcium carbonate, crushed to a high degree of fineness, has a specific surface area of $28 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$, measured according to the BET method to ISO 4652.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented) A rheology regulator according to Claim 1, wherein the natural calcium carbonate is treated with at least one fatty acid containing 10 to 24 atoms of carbon or its salt selected from the group consisting of calcium salt, magnesium salt, zinc salt and a mixture thereof in a proportion of around 0.01% to 5% by weight.

Claim 8 (Previously Presented): The rheology regulator according to Claim 7, wherein the natural calcium carbonate is treated with at least one fatty acid containing 10 to 24 atoms of carbon or its salt selected from the group consisting of calcium salt, magnesium salt, zinc salt, and a mixture thereof in a proportion of around 1% to 4% by weight.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): The rheology regulator according to Claim 1, which has an oil absorption which is greater than 16 measured according to ISO 787-V (Rub-out method).

Claims 10-13 (Canceled).

Claim 14 (Previously Presented): A plastisol, which comprises a rheology regulator according to Claim 1.

Claim 15 (Previously Presented): A rubber, which comprises a rheology regulator according to Claim 1.

Claim 16 (Previously Presented): A sealant or coating or adhesive, which comprises a rheology regulator according to Claim 1.

Claim 17 (Previously Presented): A sealant or coating or adhesive according to Claim 16, which further comprises a polyurethane with terminal silane groups and a plasticiser of the phthalate type.

Claim 18 (Currently Amended): A sealant or coating or adhesive according to Claim 16, which further comprises [[in]] one or more additives selected from the group consisting of smoked silica as a thixotropic agent, a bleaching agent, a UV stabilizer, an adhesion promoter, a catalyst, and a dehydrating agent.

Claim 19 (Withdrawn): A method of regulating the rheology during the manufacture of at least one of a sealant, an adhesive, a plastisol, and a rubber, comprising adding natural calcium carbonate, crushed to a high degree of fineness, with a specific surface area of around 14 to 30 m²/g measured according to the BET method to ISO 4652 to at least one of a sealant, an adhesive, a plastisol, and a rubber in an amount to regulate the rheology of at least one of a sealant, an adhesive, a plastisol, and a rubber.

Claim 20 (Withdrawn): The method of Claim 19, wherein the calcium carbonate has a specific surface area of around 16 to 24 m²/g.

Claim 21 (Withdrawn): The method of Claim 19, wherein the calcium carbonate has a specific surface area of around $20 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$.

Claim 22 (Withdrawn): The method of Claim 19, wherein the natural calcium carbonate has a specific surface area of $14.4 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$.

Claim 23 (Withdrawn): The method of Claim 19, wherein the natural calcium carbonate has a specific surface area of $16 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$.

Claim 24 (Withdrawn): The method of Claim 19, wherein the natural calcium carbonate has a specific surface area of $16.5 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$.

Claim 25 (Withdrawn): The method of Claim 19, wherein the natural calcium carbonate has a specific surface area of $22 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$.

Claim 26 (Withdrawn): The method of Claim 19, wherein the natural calcium carbonate has a specific surface area of $28 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$.

Claim 27 (Withdrawn): The method of Claim 19, wherein the natural calcium carbonate is treated with at least one fatty acid containing 10 to 24 carbon atoms or a salt thereof selected from the group consisting of calcium salt, magnesium salt, zinc salt, and mixtures thereof.

Claim 28 (Withdrawn): The method of Claim 19, wherein the natural calcium carbonate is treated with stearic acid or a calcium salt thereof in a proportion of around 0.01% to 5% by weight.

Claim 29 (Withdrawn): The method of Claim 19, wherein the natural calcium carbonate is treated with stearic acid or a calcium salt thereof in a proportion of around 1% to 4% by weight.

Claim 30 (Withdrawn): The method of Claim 19, wherein the natural calcium carbonate has an oil absorption which is greater than 16 measured according to ISO 787-V (Rub-out method).

Claim 31 (Withdrawn): The method of Claim 19, wherein the rheology of a sealant is regulated.

Claim 32 (Withdrawn): The method of Claim 19, wherein the rheology of an adhesive is regulated.

Claim 33 (Withdrawn): The method of Claim 19, wherein the rheology of a plastisol is regulated.

Claim 34 (Withdrawn): The method of Claim 19, wherein the rheology of a rubber is regulated.

Claim 35 (Currently Amended): A sealant, coating or adhesive prepared ~~according to the method of Claim 19~~ by a method comprising adding natural calcium carbonate, crushed to a high degree of fineness, with a specific surface area of around 14 to 30 m²/g measured according to the BET method to ISO 4652 to a sealant, a coating, or an adhesive, respectively, in an amount to regulate the rheology of said sealant, coating, or adhesive.

Claim 36 (Previously Presented): The sealant, coating or adhesive of Claim 35, which further comprises a polyurethane with terminal silane groups and a phthalate type plasticizer.

Claim 37 (Previously Presented): The sealant, coating or adhesive of Claim 35, which further comprises one or more additives selected from the group consisting of smoked silica as a thixotropic agent, a bleaching agent, a uv stabilizer, an adhesion promoter, a catalyst, and a dehydrating agent.

Claims 38-39 (Canceled).

Claim 40 (Currently Amended): A rubber prepared ~~according to the method of Claim 19~~ by a method comprising adding natural calcium carbonate, crushed to a high degree of fineness, with a specific surface area of around 14 to 30 m²/g measured according to the BET method to ISO 4652 to a rubber in an amount to regulate the rheology of said rubber.

Claim 41 (Previously Presented): The rheology regulator according to Claim 1, wherein the natural calcium carbonate has a specific surface area of 16 to 24 m²/g measured according to the BET method to ISO 4652.

Claim 42 (Previously Presented): The rheology regulator according to Claim 1, wherein the natural calcium carbonate has a specific surface area of about $20 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$ measured according to the BET method to ISO 4652.

Claim 43 (Previously Presented): The rheology regulator according to Claim 7, wherein the natural calcium carbonate is treated with stearic acid or its calcium salt.

Claim 44 (Currently Amended): The rheology regulator according to Claim 8, ~~and more particularly using~~ wherein the natural calcium carbonate is treated with stearic acid or its calcium salt.

Claim 45 (New): The plastisol according to Claim 14, which is a polyvinyl chloride-based plastisol.

DISCUSSION OF THE AMENDMENT

Claim 1 has been amended by adding a viscosity limitation thereto, as supported in the specification at page 7, lines 7-11, combined with the comparative data in the specification. Claims 5, 6, and 18 have been amended to correct clerical errors. Claims 35 and 40 have been amended into independent form. Claims 38-39 have been canceled. Claim 44 has been amended to be analogous to Claim 43. Finally, new Claim 45 has been added, as supported in the specification at page 7, line 7, for example.

No new matter is believed to have been added by the above amendment. Claims 1-9, 14-18, 35-37, and 40-45 are now active in the application; Claims 19-34 stand withdrawn from consideration.